

STATE OF IOWA

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High School Students Enrolled in College Coursework Reduce Time to Degree

DES MOINES, **lowa** — lowa high school students who enroll in community college coursework tend to be upperclassmen with higher ACT scores than their peers, according to a pair of reports released by the lowa Department of Education. In addition, they graduate from college earlier than those who do not enroll in college coursework.

The Annual Condition of Iowa's Community Colleges 2008 report, released today, includes a special focus on "jointly enrolled students." Jointly enrolled students are high school students who are also enrolled in community college credit coursework through a variety of options. These students were academically above-average students with ACT scores averaging 22.8 — nearly a point above the Iowa average and more than two points above the national average.

"Joint enrollment programs are successful in helping students make the transition from high school to college and the world of work," said Iowa Department of Education Director Judy Jeffrey. "Iowa's community colleges are enhancing learning opportunities for high school students by delivering courses through Senior Year Plus programs."

The report shows joint enrollment in lowa has risen markedly over the past five years, but with slower growth reported in 2008. A record-high total of 31,450 students enrolled during the 2007-2008 academic year.

More than 60 percent of jointly enrolled students continued to college after leaving high school. Those students who took community college coursework graduated from college earlier than those who did not. The average time-to-degree for jointly enrolled students was 2.6 years compared with 3.5 years for community college students who did not jointly enroll.

lowa students took an average of 2.4 community college courses while in high school — well above the national average of 1.4 courses.

"A shortened time-to-degree results in graduates entering the workforce sooner and saving money for the state and lowa families," Jeffrey said.

The Annual Condition of Iowa's Community Colleges 2008 report provides data on Iowa's 15 community colleges for fiscal year 2007-2008. The report includes information on enrollment, student demographics, credit and non-credit programs, human resources, college finances, and more. Highlights of the report include:

Credit

- Overall, community college credit enrollment rose to 128,146 students the largest in the colleges' history.
- Total enrollment grew 1.7 percent, which is slower than the typical rate of growth.
- Students in their late 20s to early 40s enroll in online coursework at higher rates than older or younger age groups.

Non-Credit

- Enrollment in non-credit programs increased 3.7 percent after several years of decline.
- Enrollment was greatest in programs designed to enhance employability and increase academic success.

Student Success

- Nearly 53 percent of lowa community college students graduate or transfer to a four-year university within three years.
- Seventy-two percent of adult literacy participants continued to postsecondary education.

Institutions

- The median age of community college instructors is 51 years old.
- Community colleges increased the number of employees to 12,676, mostly adding instructors.

The Annual Condition of Iowa's Community Colleges report provides Iowa citizens a tool for reviewing community college education in Iowa. The Iowa's Community Colleges Joint Enrollment Report 2008 was also released with additional information on jointly enrolled students disaggregated by college.

The full reports, presentations, and other documents may be found on the lowa Department of Education website at: http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=252&Itemid=2182

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The Iowa Department of Education works with the State of Iowa Board of Education to provide oversight, supervision and support for the state education system, which includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies, community colleges and teacher preparation programs. The department is committed to high levels of learning, achievement and performance for all students, so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce.